



## DETERMINATION OF A PRINT DISABILITY

Last Updated March 13, 2009

- Step 1: Ask the following questions:
1. Does the student require specialized formats (Braille, Large Print, Audio, Digital Text) of printed textbooks and core related instructional materials that are written and published for use in elementary and secondary school instruction?
  2. What printed textbooks and core related instructional materials are being used in the student's classes?
  3. Can this student use these materials effectively for educational achievement?
  4. If the information in the printed materials were provided to the student in a specialized format, would the information contained in the material be useful for the student?
- Queries of this kind are designed to prompt the Team (IEP or Section 504) to consider each "print disabled" student's need for accessible, specialized formats of print instructional materials.
- Step 2: Review the student's evaluation information and present levels of achievement to determine whether the student has a difficulty with the task of gaining meaning from print-based core instructional materials used in academic content areas.
- Step 3: Check the Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped database (1-800-362-2587) to see if the student has been certified as having a print disability by a competent authority based on:
- Blindness or visual impairment
  - Physical limitations that prevent the reading of standard printed material
  - Organic dysfunction of sufficient severity to prevent reading printed material in a normal manner.
- Step 4: If the student has been previously certified as having a print disability and is eligible for specialized formats under the Copyright Act as Amended, the Team:
- Initiates steps for obtaining materials in the required formats in a timely manner using the Iowa Department for the Blind <http://www.blind.state.ia.us/library>
  - Identifies instruction, supports, services, and/or training that will be needed by the student and others to use the materials effectively.

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- Step 5: If the student has NOT been previously certified as eligible for specialized formats under the Copyright Act as Amended, the Team:
- Considers whether the student's difficulties with print disabilities are due to lack of sufficient instruction or limited English proficiency
  - If the answer to either of these questions is "**yes**," specialized instruction may be more appropriate than materials in specialized formats
  - If the answer is "**no**," and the student is not eligible for specialized formats under the Copyright Act as Amended, the Team might see if the student can be certified by a Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) as having a "reading disability based on an organic dysfunction" by using the Physicians Form developed by the Iowa Center for Development and Disability. Costs associated with this form can be paid for using special education dollars. If the physician indicates "**yes**" on the form, then the form must be sent to the Library at the Department for the Blind. It may be emailed to [Library@blind.state.ia.us](mailto:Library@blind.state.ia.us) or mailed to 524 Fourth Street, Des Moines, IA 50309-2364 This student's IEP should be marked as NIMAS eligible.
  - If the physician marks "**no**" and the Team feels that the student needs materials in a specialized format but the student is not eligible under the Copyright Act as Amended, the Team should follow state guidance on how to acquire the needed specialized formats for this student.
- Step 6: If a student with a print disability does need a specialized format, the IEP or Section 504 Plan should specify the following:
- The specific format(s) to be provided (Braille, Large Print, Audio, or Digital Text)
  - The services and/or assistive technology the student needs to use the specialized formats
  - The instruction, supports, and other services, and/or training that will be needed by the student and others to use the materials effectively
  - The individual or individuals responsible for providing the specialized format(s), and
  - Whether or not the format is required to be used in the student's home or in other settings in order for the student to receive a free and appropriate public education.
- Step 7: If the student is NIMAS eligible under the Copyright Act as Amended, check the NIMAS eligible box on the IEP. If the student is not NIMAS eligible under the Copyright Act as Amended and the team feels the student has a print disability and requires specialized formats indicate this on the **services page of the IEP**. If students do not use, handle, or read textbooks or core related instructional materials then the NIMAS box on the IEP should be checked **no**.

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